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Testimony Bill 5078
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My name is Mary Burnham. Over the last 40 years, I have been a public school teacher, an owner of a small business, a director of a State Funded Early Care and Education program and presently, I am an educational consultant.

First, you should know that I am strongly in favor of rigorous academic standards and preparing our children for a global workforce.

However, I think we need standards that have research behind them and that have been fully vetted by CT classroom teachers K-12. Bill 5078 will give CT the opportunity to review the CCSS and the SBAC tests. BUT remember, these are National Standards so **CT can NOT change even one standard.**

At the hearing this Committee had on Feb. 28th, some members recognized that some Standards are inappropriate. I agree.

- The CCSS are not developmentally appropriate for grades K-3. If you want me to give you specific standards, please let me know. BUT remember, **CT can NOT change even one standard.**
- The CCSS do not allow for individualization of instruction. The CCSS are based on “one size fits all”. The CCSS require every student to have the SAME skills at the end of every grade, therefore, not allowing for individual development or instruction. For example, not every child learns to read at the same rate. Some may read as early as 4 or 5 and others not until they are 6 or 7. BUT remember, **CT can NOT change even one standard.**
- The CCSS have no research behind them and have never been even piloted. Would you allow your doctor to operate on you with a procedure that had never been researched or piloted? Our children are now the guinea pigs for these CCSS. BUT remember, **CT can NOT change even one standard.**

I am also alarmed by the amount of information about each child that may be shared with third-party testing services as part of the SBAC. We now live in a digital age but this does not preclude our attempts to safeguard our children’s personal information. Recent changes to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allow more information to be shared with third-party, for-profit companies. The lack of transparency about what information will be shared and with whom, how that information will be protected, and what policies and procedures will be in place on an ongoing basis to keep children’s information secure, should be a concern of everyone.

It is my hope that after you pass Bill 5078, you will pass legislation that will:

- Establish teacher evaluations that are constructive and provide supports for growth and improvements.
- Empower teachers to teach students in whatever manner each individual student learns best, thereby, giving students the opportunity to think critically, fulfill their curiosity, and reach their potential.
- CT is a local control State. You need to reinstate local control to communities in the on-going delivery of educational services to their children.
- Give parental control over the use of data collection of their children’s confidential information - data collection from tests or surveys or any other means.

If a core is rotten, we should throw it out.